



Congressman Jon Porter

Veterans Update

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"It is the bravery and courage of our veterans that has protected our nation from foreign invaders and brought democracy to the far reaches of the world."

Did you know?

- Nevada is home to more than 240,000 veterans

Porter Report - Veterans



Veterans in Southern Nevada have for many years indicated their desire for improved VA health services. In this edition of the "Porter Report" I have focused on a major

breakthrough: the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proposal for a new hospital and nursing home for veterans in Southern Nevada. I have also highlighted legislation in Congress I am supporting that would improve rural veterans' access to health care. I am proud to have played a role in these valuable and important actions, and I continue to work in Congress to fight for our nation's veterans.

VA Proposes New Hospital for Veterans in Southern Nevada

I was excited to join the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Anthony Principi, in announcing that the VA has proposed to build a full-service hospital in Las Vegas that will become the centerpiece of a major expansion in health services for veterans in Southern Nevada. Veterans in Southern Nevada have for many years indicated the importance of such a facility, and I have agreed with them and worked towards securing an appropriate facility.

The Department of Veterans Affairs recently completed a review and appraisal of its health care services. On August 4, 2003, the Department of Veterans Affairs released a draft national plan created by the VA Capitol Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Commission regarding health care services.

The CARES Commission draft national plan recommends the construction of a new 81-bed full service hospital in Las Vegas. In addition, the draft plan calls for the establishment of a new veterans' nursing home in the Las Vegas Valley. I believe these facilities represent a breakthrough for veterans in Southern Nevada and serve to honor their valuable service to our nation.

The VA draft national plan will now be reviewed by the Independent CARES Commission and public hearings will be conducted through October 4, 2003.

The Commission will then transmit its plan to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs by November 30, 2003, and he will make a final decision by December 30, 2003. For more information on the CARES Commission please visit <http://www.carescommission.va.gov>.

As the CARES Commission reviews this draft national plan, I will continue to push the Department of Veterans Affairs to support veterans in Southern Nevada. In order to facilitate the construction of these new projects in Southern Nevada, I, along with Representative Shelly Berkley, sponsored HR 3061. This legislation would authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs in connection with the CARES initiative.

It is time to show our appreciation to the brave men and women who have sacrificed so much for our great nation. The CARES recommendation to construct a new hospital in Las Vegas is certainly a big step in the right direction and I am proud to have played a role in achieving this long sought after goal.

Porter Fights for Rural Veterans



Recently I joined with my colleague, Congressman Tom Osborne of Nevada, to testify before the Committee on Veterans Affairs in support of veterans residing in rural areas. I am proud to be a cosponsor of HR 2379, the Rural Veterans' Access to Care Act. This legislation would reduce hardships many veterans face when seeking VA care in facilities more than a one hour drive from their homes.

During the hearing, I testified on behalf of veterans in rural areas of Nevada and focused on veterans in the Laughlin area. These veterans must drive 200 miles round trip to receive their healthcare services in Las Vegas. During much of the year, high temperatures in the Mojave Desert combined with congested infrastructure make travel difficult and dangerous for older veterans. ([full text of Porter testimony on HR 2379](#))

While I represent Southern Nevada, I understand that veterans in Northern Nevada, and particularly Elko, as well as rural veterans across the nation face many of the same problems accessing VA health care. It is my hope that this legislation will help to address the needs of these veterans. While many veterans live in cities such as Las Vegas, Henderson, and Reno, veterans who prefer to live in smaller communities should not be forced to sacrifice their health benefits.

Contact Me

Should you require additional information regarding veterans' issues, if you would like to inform me of your views, or if you require assistance with Veterans Affairs claims, please contact me anytime in either my Henderson, NV

Congressman Jon Porter

218 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-3252

2501 N. Green Valley
Parkway
Suite #112D
Henderson, NV 89014
702-387-4941

Visit Online:
www.house.gov/Porter

or Washington, DC offices.